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THE TOMBS OF PETER AND PAUL
AD CATACUMBASGEORGE LA PIANA
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

RECENT archaeological discoveries have contributed in many ways to enrich our knowledge of the early periods of Christian history. It cannot be denied that the results of these investigations as a whole have given testimony in favor of the conservative historical tradition, rather than of the aggressive criticism of the last century. In many cases archaeological evidence has verified or confirmed traditions to which historical criticism had denied any positive value, and solved what had been regarded as insoluble problems. Where literary evidence was lacking or inconclusive, archaeology and ancient liturgy have furnished the historians of the early centuries of the Church new sources of knowledge of inestimable value.

A striking illustration of this is found in a recent book, "Petrus und Paulus in Rom. Liturgische und archaeologische Studien" (Bonn, 1915), in which Professor H. Lietzmann collects and analyzes a body of liturgical and archaeological evidence relating to the tombs of Peter and of Paul in Rome, and comes to the conclusion that the old Roman tradition which venerates Peter's grave at the Vatican and that of Paul on the Ostian Way is historically sound, and that no serious objection can be raised against it. Coming from a well known Protestant scholar, this new and very valuable contribution to the *vexata quaestio* was warmly welcomed by eminent Catholic writers. "Was den Hauptteil des Buches angeht, so müssen wir Katholiken dem Verfasser geradezu dankbar sein. Wir hätten die Katholische Tradition nicht besser verteidigen können, als er es getan hat," says Rauschen (*Theologische Revue*, 1916, pp. 11 f.); and Professor Buonaiuti, of Rome, remarks that "fair play in scientific research has effectively overcome all confessional bias" (*Religio*, 1920, p. 78). Lietzmann's work did not pass unnoticed in America. Professor W. W. Rockwell

made a detailed survey of it in the *American Journal of Theology* (1918, pp. 113-124), and Professor Kirsopp Lake called to it the attention of the readers of the *American Historical Review* (April 1920, p. 483). But the importance of the question itself, and the fact that since the publication of Lietzmann's book, further excavations under the Basilica of St. Sebastian ad Catacumbas in Rome have supplied new and important material, make necessary a new survey and discussion of the whole problem.¹*

Lietzmann's efforts are directed towards tracing the tradition of the Apostolic tombs in Rome as far back as the third century, so as to be able to connect it with the well known statement of Gaius (about 200 A.D.) quoted by Eusebius: *Ἐγὼ δὲ τὰ τρόπαια τῶν Ἀποστόλων ἔχω δεῖξαι. Ἐὰν γὰρ θελήσῃς ἀπελθεῖν ἐπὶ τὸν Βατικανὸν ἢ ἐπὶ τὴν ὁδὸν τὴν ὠστίαν, εὐρήσεις τὰ τρόπαια τῶν ταύτην ἰδρυσασμένων τὴν ἐκκλησίαν* (H. E. ii. 25, 7), "I can show the trophies of the apostles. Go to the Vatican or to the Ostian Way, and thou wilt find the trophies of the founders of this church." This statement is not decisive, it leaves room for doubt; but if we succeed in obtaining satisfactory evidence from other sources that about the middle of the third century the sites at the Vatican and on the Ostian Way where today stand the two great Basilicas were venerated as being the resting places of the bodies of Peter and Paul — so Lietzmann's argument seems to run — we must conclude that the tradition is genuine; the silence of all the literary sources from *ca.* 64 to 200 is regrettable, but does not invalidate the tradition, because there is to be put on the other side the absence of any rival claims in behalf of other cities, and positive archaeological evidence.

"If the graves shown about the year 200 had been fictitious, the error or fraud must have occurred by 170 at the latest. By that time, however, the custom of Christian burial in the catacombs was fully developed. One who was careless or meant to deceive would be likely to 'find' the remains in the catacombs, near those of other Christians, where Christian sentiment was dominant, where Christian worship was easy. The relics might have been 'invented' lying side by side. The ancient and unanimous tradition, however, finds the graves of Peter and Paul widely separated, hard by well-

* See Notes at the end of this article, pp. 87-94.

travelled roads, each alone in the midst of heathen graves. The natural explanation is that the ancient sites are genuine: that beneath the Hall of the Three Emperors there actually rest the remains of Paul and under the mighty dome of Bramante those of Peter.”²

Whatever may be thought of the probative value of this argument, so well presented by Lietzmann, it is undeniable that if we find a sound basis for the Roman tradition, so that the *τρόπαια* named by Gaius must really be identified with the tombs of the Apostles, we may assume that a definite step has been made towards the final historical solution of this problem.

The most important source of information about this tradition is found in the ancient Roman liturgy. The oldest *Feriale* of the church of Rome known to us, the so-called Philocalian Calendar,³ mentions two liturgical commemorations of the Apostles. The first is given under the 22d of February (*VIII Kal. Martias. Natale Petri de Cathedra*), and is intended to be a commemoration of the beginning of the episcopate or the apostolate of Peter. Its institution goes back to the first half of the fourth century. “The choice of the day,” says Duchesne, whose conclusions are followed by Lietzmann, “was not suggested by any Christian tradition. In the ancient calendar of pagan Rome the 22d of February was devoted to the celebration of a festival (*Caristia*, or *Cara Cognatio*), popular above all others, in memory of the dead of each family. The observance of this festival and the participation in its ceremonies were considered as incompatible with the profession of a Christian, but it was very difficult to uproot such ancient and cherished habits. It was doubtless to meet this difficulty that the Christian festival of the 22d of February was instituted.”⁴ This festival arose too late to shed any fresh light on the question of Peter’s pontificate in Rome.⁵

The second commemoration of Peter mentioned in the Philocalian Calendar, is that of the 29th of June, which is common to both Peter and Paul: *III Kal. Iul. Petri in Catacumbas et Pauli Ostense. Tusco et Basso Cons.* The consular date corresponds to the year 258. “Evidently we have here, not the anniversary of the martyrdom of either of the apostles, or of

them both together, but merely the commemoration of the translation of their relics to the place called *ad Catacumbas*, at the third milestone on the Appian Way.”⁶ This is the interpretation given to the passage of the Ferial by Duchesne and commonly accepted by historians. Lietzmann deals at length with this point, and fortifies Duchesne’s theory by pointing out that in the Oriental martyrologies the festival of June 29 is ignored, while recourse was made to an artificial liturgical construction in assigning the commemoration of Peter and Paul to December 28.

If this interpretation of the Philocalian text is right, we have an historical datum of the greatest importance for the whole question in the fact that in the year 258 a liturgical commemoration was instituted for the temporary translation of the bodies of Peter and Paul from their resting places at the Vatican and on the Ostian Way to the site *ad Catacumbas* on the Appian Way. If this translation is proved to have happened, we have in it the connecting link with Gaius’s *τρόπαια*, and the whole Roman tradition of the apostolic tombs may be considered as resting on a secure historical foundation. This is the pivot of the whole situation. To make the case stronger, just as Lietzmann’s book was ready for publication, fresh excavations within the basilica *ad Catacumbas* brought to light a new and apparently irrefragable evidence that as early as the latter part of the third century the memory of Peter and Paul was an object of special cult in that place. The author was thus able to add to his book a new chapter (pp. 116–121) and an appendix (pp. 180–183) dealing with this opportune archaeological evidence, although on account of the lack of more complete information he gave to some important details of the new discoveries an entirely erroneous interpretation. The excavations, interrupted in May 1916, were resumed for a short period in 1917, and then again in 1919, with very important results. In the light of the new data, the great majority of the Roman archaeologists⁷ think that the question has been finally settled, and that the translation of the Apostles *ad Catacumbas* in the year 258 or even earlier is an established historical fact. Let us see whether such a conclusion is warranted by the docu-

mentary evidence on which rests the assumption of the translation ad Catacumbas, and by the archaeological evidence which is supposed to complete and to make irrefragable the testimony of the documents.

The first explicit mention of the fact that the bodies of Peter and Paul were once sheltered *ad Catacumbas* is found in the *Liber Pontificalis*. In the life of Pope Cornelius (251–253) it is said that the pope, yielding to the instances of the pious lady Lucina, restored Peter's body to the Vatican *iuxta locum quo crucifixus est*, while Lucina herself assumed the task of taking back the body of Paul to the site on the Via Ostiensis, *iuxta locum quo decollatus est*.⁸ This part of the *Liber Pontificalis* was compiled with the use of older documents, at the beginning of the sixth century; but the whole narrative of the translation is admittedly of a legendary character. If the bodies were restored to the old places in 251–253, the entire theory based on the consular date (258) in the *Feriale* would break down.

The tradition appears more definite, and with a great wealth of detail, in the apocryphal *Passiones* of the two Apostles, which probably were written about the middle of the fifth century. The Latin *Passio Sanctorum Apostolorum Petri et Pauli* relates that some Greek Christians, shortly after the death of the Apostles, made an attempt to steal their bodies and take them to the East, but were prevented by an earthquake and other miraculous occurrences from going farther than the site ad Catacumbas, on the Appian Way, where the Romans stopped the robbers, “*et ibi custodita sunt corpora anno uno et mensibus septem, quousque fabricarentur loca in quibus fuerunt posita corpora eorum.*”⁹ Similar is the narrative in the *Μαρτύριον τῶν ἁγίων ἀποστόλων Πέτρου καὶ Παύλου* and in the *Πράξεις τῶν ἁγίων ἀποστόλων Πέτρου καὶ Παύλου*; ¹⁰ the latter, however, affirms that the bodies remained ad Catacumbas only one year and *six* months, instead of *seven*.

A different story is told in the *Passio Syriaca* of the martyr Sharbil.¹¹ According to it the Praetor of Rome, in the times of Pope Fabianus (236–250), ordered all foreigners living in Rome

to leave the city. The Oriental Christians asked from the Praetor permission to take their dead with them, which the Praetor granted; whereupon they set about removing the bodies of Peter and Paul. When the Romans objected to such a removal, the Orientals replied: "Learn and see that Simon, who is called Kephas, is of Bethsaida in Galilee, and that the Apostle Paul is of Tarsus in Cilicia." So the Romans let them take the bodies; but while they were removing them, a great earthquake threw the city into a panic, and not only were the bodies laid down in their places again, but the whole city was converted to the Christian religion.

The legendary acts of St. Sebastian, also mention the place ad Catacumbas *iuxta vestigia Apostolorum*, and the fifth century *Acta Quirini* say of the same place, "*ubi aliquando jacuerunt*," (*sc.* the Apostles). Finally, in the life of pope Damasus in the *Liber Pontificalis* (Cononian abridgement of the year 687) it is said that Damasus "*dedicavit Platomum in Catacumbas ubi corpora Petri et Pauli apostolorum iacuerunt, quam et versibus exornavit*." This statement is correct, as concerns what Damasus did, but the clause *ubi corpora . . . iacuerunt*, in a document compiled in the late seventh century, may be dependent on the legend and cannot be safely attributed to the compiler's source. This point will be made more clear when we come to deal with Damasus's inscription.

Pope Gregory the Great (590-604), in a letter to the empress Constantina, tells the story of the robbery attempted by the Greeks¹² and thus gave to the legend the consecration of his authority. The *Notitiae* and the *Itineraria* of the Middle Ages do not fail to mention that ad Catacumbas *olim requieverunt Apostolorum corpora*,¹³ thus perpetuating the tradition, which survived down to the modern times. According to these mediaeval documents, however, the bodies of the Apostles remained ad Catacumbas for a much longer period, that is to say forty years,^{13a} and in others as much as 252 years.^{13b}

It is evident, therefore, that the first explicit mention of such a tradition appears only in documents which in the best case are not older than the fifth century, and by common acknowledgment are of a legendary character, and furthermore

give contradictory accounts about the time, the motives, and the circumstances of the assumed translation of the bodies of the Apostles. The only conclusion that can properly be drawn from these stories is that, about the middle of the fifth century, the tradition connecting the site ad Catacumbas with a temporary tomb of Peter and Paul, was already in existence. If this tradition had no other support than these legends, it could be dismissed with a few words; but there is another series of documentary sources, much older and more trustworthy, which although they do not make explicit mention of the translation ad Catacumbas, may be construed and interpreted as implicitly containing a positive statement about it.

And first, the liturgical commemoration of the Apostles ad Catacumbas. The passage of the Philocalian Calendar quoted above puzzling as it is, leaves no doubt that the commemoration of the Apostles on the 29th of June was already old when Philocalus compiled his Chronography. In effect, this date as we have already noticed, was not that of the martyrdom of either Peter or Paul, and yet when Philocalus copied the list of the *Depositio Martyrum* in his Chronography, the 29th of June was considered in Rome as being truly the *dies natalis* of the Apostles. This implies that the original meaning of the commemoration was already forgotten, and therefore that the commemoration itself had been instituted long before the times of Philocalus. The date of 258 (Tusco et Basso Cons.), if it is not a mistake, and has any meaning at all, can only be that of the institution of this commemoration ad Catacumbas.¹⁴

But according to the text of the *Feriale* only Peter was commemorated ad Catacumbas, while Paul's commemoration was held in the traditional place on the Ostian way — *Petri in Catacumbas et Pauli Ostense*. This is a serious difficulty, because it is impossible to admit that between 336 and 354, when the two redactions of the Chronography were made, Peter was commemorated only ad Catacumbas and not at the Vatican. Moreover, there is another source, in which we find a different text, viz. the *Martyrologium Hieronymianum*, which says: *III Kal. Jul. Romae Via Aurelia Natale Sanctorum Apostolorum*

Petri et Pauli. Petri in Vaticano Via Aurelia. Pauli vero in Via Ostiensi. Utriumque in Catacumbas. Passi sub Nerone. Basso et Tusco Consulibus. The Hieronymianum was compiled in Southern Gaul, probably in Auxerre, between the years 592 and 600, by putting together partial lists belonging to various churches. One of the most important sources of the compiler was an old Roman list, or local martyrology, of which we find traces in the latter part of the fourth century,¹⁵ so that we may assume with a measure of certainty that the passage above quoted, stood in a Roman martyrology which must have been in use in Rome, perhaps in the time of Philocalus, or at least only a few years later. From this passage we gather that in the latter part of the fourth century the *natale* of the Apostles was celebrated in Rome on June 29 in three different places, that of Peter at the Vatican, that of Paul on the Ostian way, and of both ad Catacumbas. The date of their martyrdom is given rightly under Nero. The consular date corresponding to the year 258 is also added, evidently from the old *Feriale*, but without any explanation.

It was thought that the divergence between the *Feriale* and the Hieronymianum could be explained by supposing that when the first redaction of the Philocalian was made the body of Paul had already been restored to the site on the Ostian way, in the newly built basilica, and therefore his commemoration also returned to the old place,¹⁶ whereas Peter's body was still ad Catacumbas, perhaps because the Vatican basilica was not yet completed; when several years later, the Roman martyrology (source of the Hieronymianum) was compiled, the translation of Peter's body had also taken place, and the commemoration was held at the Vatican; the memory, however, of their temporary deposition ad Catacumbas was perpetuated by keeping up the commemoration of both in that place. The weak point of this theory lies in the fact that while we may admit that in 336 the Vatican basilica may have not been completed, and that Peter's commemoration consequently could be held only ad Catacumbas, it cannot be admitted that the same condition existed in 354 when Philocalus revised his Chronography. By that time the Vatican basilica was already open for wor-

ship, and we have evidence that the veneration of Peter's memory was there fully established. Philocalus, therefore, who was living in Rome and in the ecclesiastical circles, could not have failed to add to the *Feriale* the commemoration of Peter at the Vatican. That about that time the commemoration of the Apostles was celebrated in the three places mentioned by the Hieronymianum, we have a proof in an old hymn attributed to Ambrose of Milan, in which it is said that on the 29th of June

Trinis celebratur viis
festum sacrorum martyrum.¹⁷

We must infer that the text of Philocalus is perhaps mutilated and therefore unreliable — “il faut le sacrifier,” says Duchesne. The Hieronymianum becomes our best authority on this point. But apart from the late date of its compilation, we are familiar enough with the methods used by the compiler, and the instance of his duplication of the festival *de Cathedra* obliges us to be on guard. And if we must be distrustful of its express statements, much less is it permissible to rely upon it and draw further inferences from suspicious sources. In conclusion neither the *Feriale* nor the Hieronymianum affords either implicit or explicit evidence that a translation of the bodies of the Apostles ever took place in Rome: all that can be gathered from them is that at a certain time, perhaps after the middle of the third century, a commemoration of Peter was instituted ad Catacumbas, and that either at the same time or later a corresponding commemoration of Paul had been coupled with it. But there is no hint that the institution of this commemoration was due to a translation of the bodies of one or of both ad Catacumbas; on the contrary, this origin is implicitly excluded by the assumption that the 29th of June is the *dies natalis* of the Apostles. The date 258 given by the *Feriale* and reproduced in the Hieronymianum may be only a mistake; but in any case, it may be explained, as we shall see later, in a different way than by admitting a translation of the bodies. A more important literary source is Damasus' inscription mentioned in the passage already quoted of the *Liber Pontificalis*. Of this tablet only a small fragment has been found, but the text of the inscription

has been preserved by the old itineraria. According to the best reconstruction it read as follows:

Hic abitasse prius sanctos cognoscere debes
 Nomina quisque Petri pariter Paulique requiris
 Discipulos oriens misit quod sponte fatemur,
 Sanguinis ob meritum Christumque per astra secuti
 Aetherios petiere sinus regnaque piorum.
 Roma suos potius meruit defendere cives.
 Haec Damasus vestras referat nova sidera laudes.

“Thou must know that formerly saints dwelt here, and their names, if thou wish to inquire, are those of Peter and Paul. We confess willingly that the Orient sent these disciples. By the merit of their blood (their martyrdom) they followed Christ to heaven, and reached the celestial refuge and the kingdom of the saints. Rome merited the privilege of defending them as being its citizens. Damasus relates these things in your praise, O new stars.”

Damasus' poetical style in general is not notable for clearness; we must confess, however, that if this inscription appears to be an intricate puzzle, the fault is perhaps with the interpreters. It is assumed that in the first verse there is a clear statement (*habitasse prius*) that the Apostles had temporarily lodged in tombs ad Catacumbas, while in the antithesis of the third and sixth verses (*Oriens misit; Roma meruit defendere*) a no less clear allusion is discovered to the attempt of the Orientals to steal the bodies, and to the resistance of the Romans to this attempt.

There is no doubt that the inscription was so interpreted by the authors of the legends that flourished in the fifth century. Even a literary dependence may with much probability be recognized, as for instance in the passage of the *Passio* which says, “*Gaudete et exultate (o Romani), quia patronos magnos meruistis habere,*”^{17a} which evidently recalls the “*Roma meruit potius*” of Damasus. It might not be going too far to surmise that it was from such an interpretation of the inscription that the legend arose — it would not be the only case of legends which originated in misunderstanding of inscriptions finding their way into Christian hagiography. But if, forgetting the legend, we try to understand Damasus' awkward poem in the

light of the events of the time in which Damasus wrote it, we may find his inscription as clear as it must have been to his contemporaries.

The suggestion that the inscription may allude to the antagonistic attitude of the Eastern towards the Western Church, has been summarily dismissed as being out of the question. And yet I think that it is exactly what Damasus means by his antithesis, *Oriens misit — Roma meruit*. It must not be forgotten that it was in the pontificate of Damasus that a Council formally recognized the Church of Constantinople as standing on an equal footing with the Church of Rome. Bad feeling between the two great branches of Christianity had existed for long time. The Western Church had not forgotten that under the reign of Constantius it had been obliged to accept at Rimini the Arianizing theology of the eastern bishops who had the ear of the emperor, nor the violent measures taken against the recalcitrant western prelates. The West had learned to distrust the East, and these feelings played a great part in the whole history of that period. Damasus himself, under the influence of the intrigant Peter of Alexandria, made the disastrous error of alienating the sympathies of the theologians of the Cappadocian group, who were the staunchest supporters of orthodoxy, and were anxious to coöperate with Rome for the pacification of the Church.¹⁸

The situation was made still worse by the obstinacy with which Damasus in Rome and Ambrose in Milan insisted on recognizing as legitimate bishop of Antioch the intruder Paulinus, unlawfully ordained by Lucifer of Cagliari while passing through Antioch, against the legitimate bishop Meletius. The climax came at the Council of Constantinople (381). Thanks to the efforts of the Cappadocians and of their friends¹⁹ the theological formulations of the council were strictly orthodox; but on the other hand the Council did not hesitate to reject the claims of the West for Paulinus; nay it gave to Meletius, the bishop condemned by Rome and Milan, the presidency of the Council. It went still farther and after Meletius' death, which happened a few days later, refused to recognize Paulinus *pro bono pacis*, and had a new election held for the see of An-

tioch, emphasizing the fact that the East, would not brook the interference of the West in matter of episcopal elections or church discipline. And finally, it was the same Council that formulated the famous third Canon, attributing to the see of Constantinople, the New Rome, the same standing in the Church as the see of the Old Rome, to which was reserved nothing but an empty honorary precedence.

Now it was during these excited counciliar debates about Paulinus's case that some of the bishops uttered the famous remark, "After all Christ was born in the East," to which the pious bishop of Constantinople and new president of the Council, Gregory of Nazianzus, who was in favor of a more conciliatory policy, replied, "Yes, but it was because in the East it was easier to be crucified."²⁰ That sentiments like those to which the bishops gave utterance at the council were very common among the people there, Gregory's own description leaves no doubt. Not only the young ones *τύρβη νέων*, but even the old bishops, *ἡ σέμνη γερουσία*, were like enraged hornets:

* Ἀτακτα παφλάζουσιν ἡ σφικῶν δίκην
ἄττουσιν εὐθὺ τῶν προσώπων ἀθρόως.

Much more incensed must have been the common people, the *δῆμος κολοιῶν*, who were wont to take a more direct part in all religious issues than the western Christians. It is quite natural to suppose that they would boast also of the eastern nationality of Peter and Paul. A late echo of those popular expressions may be found in the *Passio Syriaca* quoted above, where to the remark of the Orientals, "Remember you Romans that Peter was born in Bethsaida and Paul in Tarsus," the discomfitted Roman had no reply. It would not be strange if Pope Damasus to counteract the impression that such claims might make upon his flock, and especially among the simple minded and ignorant, thought it advisable, now that they had been voiced even in a council, to take the opportunity of the dedication of the *Platomum*, to assert once more the rights of Rome. What Damasus says in effect is: "Yes, Peter and Paul were born in the East, you do not need to remind us of that (*spon te fatemur*), but it was here that they gave their blood, it was here that

they were reborn to the immortal life, and therefore Rome has the right to claim and defend them as its citizens."

We find ourselves on less firm ground in the interpretation of the first verse of Damasus's inscription: "*hic abitasse prius*." It cannot be denied that the verb *habitare* is found in the epigraphic terminology in the meaning of *to be buried*; Damasus himself in another inscription has it in this meaning.²¹ But it is not impossible that in the inscription ad Catacumbas the verb *habitare* may have been used in its primary meaning, 'to dwell,' of a living person. It is not only possible but very likely that in that place, which much later was called ad Catacumbas, and where during the first century stood a large villa whose substructions have been discovered under the basilica, Peter may have found a refuge while living in Rome. There are traces that such was the case. Professor Marucchi himself who stands *unquibus et rostris* for the translation of the Apostles ad Catacumbas, not only does not deny the possibility of such a connection, but, on the contrary, thinks that there must have been an old tradition linking Peter with that neighborhood on the Appian way, a tradition which would explain the choice of the place for the cemetery of Callistus and the legend of the *Quo Vadis*.²² The *habitasse prius* of Damasus may be an echo of this tradition which disappeared when it was superseded by that of the translation.^{22a}

That Peter only, and not Paul, would be thus originally connected with the site ad Catacumbas is not a valid objection. The old Feriale of the Roman Church does the same. Moreover, we know that the Roman tradition of the third and following century was for various reasons strongly inclined to couple the names of the two Apostles on all occasions. Were not their *dies natalis* assigned to the same day, although they were executed neither the same day nor the same year? Peter and Paul was already a binomial like Castor and Pollux, and it has been remarked that Damasus, when he invokes the Apostles as *nova sidera*, must have been thinking of the *lucida sidera*, the title given by Horace to the Dioscuri protectors of the pagan Rome.²³

In this connection it will be useful to pay attention to the

circumstances of Damasus' times. It was a time in which the cult of the martyrs was acquiring immense importance in the life of the Church. Searching for the concealed bodies of the martyrs of the various persecutions had become a favorite occupation of both bishops and laymen. Hundreds of relics of supposed martyrs were brought to light, and churches and chapels were erected in their honor.²⁴ In many cases the martyr himself would reveal in a dream the place of his grave. It was thus that Ambrose of Milan discovered the bodies of Gervasius and Protasius. Damasus himself, who spent a great deal of his energy in finding and restoring tombs of martyrs²⁵ seems to have received visions of this kind, like that which led him to the identification of the remains of the martyr Eutychius:

Nocte soporifera turbant insomnia mentem,
Ostendit latebra insonantis quae membra teneret
Quaeritur, inventus colitur, fovet, omnia praestat.²⁶

It is easy to perceive that such a practice could not fail to lead to serious abuses. As early as the year 401 an African council found it necessary to forbid the erection of altars in places pointed out by visions: "*Quae per somnia et per inanes quasi revelationes quorumlibet hominum ubique constituuntur altaria omnimode prohibentur.*" The *Memoriae Martyrum* were permitted only where there were bodies of real martyrs, or "*ubi origo alicuius habitationis, vel possessionis vel passionis, fidelissima origine traditur.*"²⁷ Although a decree of a provincial council, it reflects a situation which was more or less general, and the official attitude of the Church against the abuses. In Rome the procedure on this matter was always more regular than elsewhere, and it seems that the restrictions later formulated at Carthage for the Church of Africa were already applied in Rome in the time of Damasus. In fact, the poet pope does not fail to mention in his inscriptions the historical circumstance which justifies the cult of a martyr in a given place, and when he is not sure of the facts he is careful to say *fama refert*, or *Damasus haec audita refert*. It seems strange, however, that in the case before us, while he gives the fact as certain (*cognoscere debes*), he should mention such an important thing as the temporary occupation by the Apostles of tombs ad Catacumbas

with the ambiguous verb *habitasse*, without adding any explanatory clause.²⁸

That the verb *habitasse* is to be taken in its natural meaning will be evident when we see, as we shall, that a translation of the bodies of the Apostles to the Appian Way not only is not warranted by any positive testimony, but appears for various reasons to be highly improbable. Really, what could have been the motive for the removal of the bodies? The legend of the oriental thieves is out of the question.²⁹ Duchesne thought that the answer was to be found in the consular date (258) in the *Feriale*. The Church was under persecution, and in the preceding year (257) an imperial edict forbade all kinds of Christian meetings, especially in cemeteries. It seems that an armed guard was stationed to enforce the law in the places more frequented by the Christians. The apostolic tombs at the Vatican and on the Ostian Way must have been the first to be put under strict surveillance. It was natural under such circumstances that the Christians should think of removing the bodies of the Apostles to a new place, where they could hold their meetings without arousing the suspicion of the police. The site ad Catacumbas was exceptionally well adapted for such a purpose.

Against this hypothesis which found almost universal acceptance, serious objections were raised by no less an authority in the hagiographic literature than the Bollandist Fr. Delehaye.³⁰ First of all, it must be remembered that respect for the tomb was one of the most sacred traditions of Roman life, and that the Roman law was very severe against the transgressors.³¹ To violate a tomb and remove the remains was a capital crime. When, on account of extraordinary circumstances, a removal was necessary, it could be done only after the granting of a special permit. There is no example in Rome of the tombs of the martyrs ever being molested by the government even in times of fierce persecutions. The Christians therefore had nothing to fear for the tombs of the Apostles. Moreover, we can hardly think that the Christians, while they were being persecuted, would dare to transgress a law which was severely enforced at any time and the violation of which would have

drawn upon them fresh rigors of the law and the wrath of the superstitious populace. Not to mention that, if the cemeteries were, as we have reason to believe, under heavy guard, it must have been a very difficult task to accomplish such a removal.

It is more natural and more simple to suppose that the Christians of Rome, unable to meet in the usual places and to invoke the Apostles in the vicinity of their graves, held their religious meetings in the villa ad Catacumbas, which must have been the property of a rich Christian, and there celebrated the commemoration of the 29th of June which was destined to become the great festival of Peter and Paul. The choice of the place may have been suggested not only by its safety as on private property, but also by the tradition connecting it with Peter.³²

A removal of the bodies was not only unnecessary and impracticable, but against the feelings of the Christians of Rome, who very likely would have considered such a thing as a sacrilegious attempt. As a matter of fact we have no instance of translations of bodies of martyrs in Rome during the first five centuries. The so-called translations of which mention is found in catalogues and martyrologies as having happened in Rome during that period are either of a legendary character, or are special cases which cannot be classified as real translations. Such, for example, is the case of the bodies of Pope Pontianus and of Hippolytus brought from Sardinia to Rome. Those who were deported for any reason and died in exile were frequently reclaimed by their relatives, and the government usually did not refuse the permission, because they were considered as bodies which had not been *perpetuae sepulturae tradita* and as such their removal was an act of piety. In the same way the body of Pope Cornelius, who died an exile in Centumcellae, was brought back to Rome.

The two instances quoted by Lietzmann (pp. 84-87) to prove that translations were common in Rome, that of Parthenius and Calocerus (May 19, 304) and that of Blesilla (September 22, 304) have no historical basis. That their bodies were removed from one place to another in the same cemetery was never any-

thing but an hypothesis of De Rossi's which has been completely discarded, because there is no archaeological evidence of such a translation, and the year (304) mentioned by the Philocalian is really that of their martyrdom.³³ No less groundless are the supposed translations of Zephyrinus³⁴ and Silanus³⁵ from one cemetery to another, and that of Fabianus³⁶ from the cemetery of Callistus to the place ad Catacumbas. The cases of the martyr Quirinus, bishop of Siscia in Pannonia, and that of the so-called *Quatuor Coronati*, are of a different kind. They were not Roman martyrs, but their remains were brought to Rome under peculiar circumstances. When the barbarians invaded Pannonia some Christians fled thence to Rome carrying with them the relics of Quirinus, their martyr patron. As for the *Quatuor Coronati*, the translation, if it ever happened, did not take place before the sixth century, although they were venerated in Rome as early as the fourth century.³⁷ In conclusion, there is not a single piece of incontrovertible evidence that translations of martyrs were practised in Rome until we come to the late fifth century. While in the East, and in the western provinces which had been influenced by the eastern discipline, translations of martyrs became common shortly after the peace of the Church, and their bodies were without any respect dismembered and scattered through the various churches to satisfy the demand for relics, Rome adhered firmly to its ancient discipline,³⁸ piously respecting the tombs of its martyrs, and refusing to touch them even at the request of emperors and empresses. The letter of Gregory the Great mentioned above was written in reply to a request made by the empress Constantina begging the pope to send to Constantinople relics of the bodies of Peter and Paul. "*Romanis consuetudo non est*," replied the Pope.³⁹ The translation of the bodies of Peter and Paul, supposed to have taken place the year 258 or at an earlier date, would be therefore a *unique case* in the history of the Roman Church of the first centuries; and it is quite logical that before accepting it as an historical fact we should ask better evidence than that afforded by baseless legends or by equivocal interpretations of doubtful texts. Has archaeology supplied this evidence?

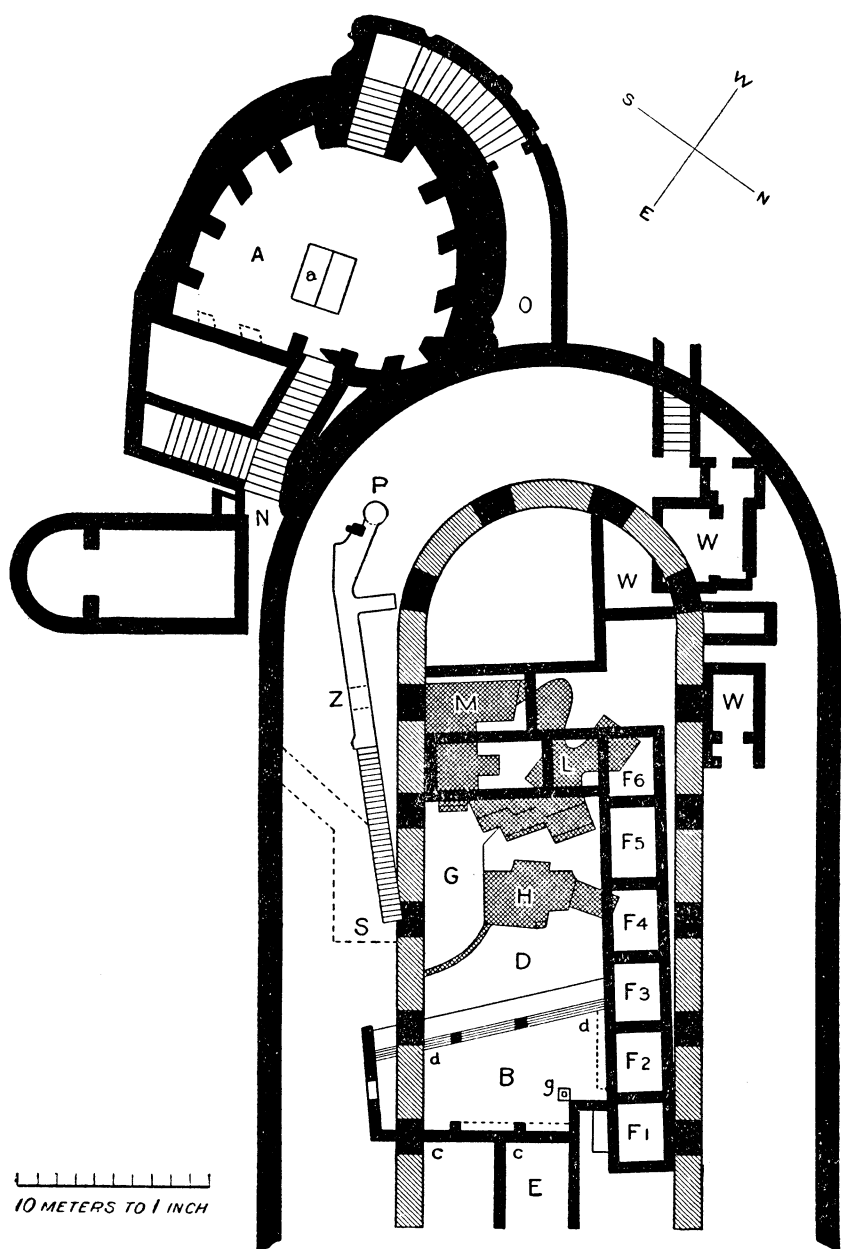


PLATE I

The Basilica of St. Sebastian ad Catacumbas on the Appian Way was originally built as a memorial to the Apostles Peter and Paul, and up to the eighth century was called *Basilica Apostolorum*. It was erected in the second half of the fourth century, probably under the pontificate of Damasus.⁴⁰ The basilica had originally three naves without a transept, and with a peribolos instead of an apse.⁴¹ In the eighth century, probably under Pope Adrian I (772-795), the whole building was collapsing, and it was thought necessary to close the two lateral naves by walling up the spaces between the pillars, the basilica being thus left with only its central nave. Extensive restorations carried on under Cardinal Scipione Borghese in the sixteenth century gave to the church its present uninteresting aspect. Outside the walls of the old basilica at the left side of the peribolos there is a small crypt (Plate I, A) which is now called *Platonía*,⁴² and probably since the sixteenth century has been identified as the place where the bodies of Peter and Paul were deposited while ad Catacumbas. Access to the Platonía, whose level is about 17 feet lower than the Basilica, was originally by a stairway on the east side (N), but in the course of Borghese's restoration this entrance was walled up, and a new entrance was constructed on the west side (O). Within the Platonía is a cella (*a*) in the form of a sarcophagus decorated with marble slabs and divided into two sections, as if it were made for two bodies. It is surmounted by a vault which still shows traces of paintings. The double sarcophagus was thought to be that which once held the remains of the Apostles. Around the wall of the Platonía there are thirteen arcosolia⁴³ decorated with stucco reliefs, which were supposed to contain the tombs of the early popes.*

* *On the plan (Plate I).* — A, Platonía. B, Triclia. D, Court. E, Cella S. Faviani. F 1-6, Columbaria. G, Cavity, 30 feet beneath the level of the Basilica. H, L, M, Roman funereal chambers. N, Old stairs to the Platonía. O, New stairs to the Platonía. P, Bottom of the excavation, 40 feet beneath the level of the Basilica. S, Stairway leading to the gallery. Z, Plastered strip on the walls of the gallery. W, Remains of a Roman Villa. *a*, Cella (*bisomus*) under the Platonía. *c-c*, Wall of the Triclia on which are the graffiti. *d-d*, Parapet of the Triclia facing the court. *g*, little fountain in the Triclia.

The small building with an apse, at the left of the Basilica, is the so-called *Domus Petri*.

In 1893 an investigation was made under the direction of Mgr. De Waal to ascertain whether the traditions were confirmed by archaeological evidence. The results were wholly unexpected.⁴⁴ Instead of containing the tombs of the early popes, the spaces within the arcosolia were found filled to their capacity with tombs in form of pigeon-holes, dating from the fifth century. In demolishing a superstructure added to the arcosolia in order to make room for other tombs, the old wall of the Platonía was discovered and on it a monumental inscription in six verses running around the whole semicircular hall. The first verse and part of the last were still legible:

Quae tibi martyr rependo munera laudis
Haec Quirine tuas . . . probari.

It was evident that the Platonía was not the Memoria Apostolorum, but a memorial of the martyr Quirinus, bishop of Siscia, whose remains, as has been said above, were brought to Rome in the beginning of the fifth century, and according to the Acta: "*Via Appia miliario tertio sepelierunt in basilica Apostolorum Petri et Pauli, ubi aliquando jacuerunt, et ubi S. Sebastianus Martyr Christi requiescit in loco qui dicitur Catacumbas; aedificantes nomini eius dignam ecclesiam.*" The Platonía was this *digna ecclesia* built for Quirinus. The lower part of its walls belonged to a Roman building which was older than the Basilica, as is evident from the fact that the northern corner of the Platonía was cut to make room for the wall of the apse, while the upper part of the walls seems to be posterior to the Basilica.⁴⁵ Pope Innocent II (1130–1143) removed the remains of Quirinus from the Platonía to the Basilica of S. Maria in Trastevere and from that time the original destination of the Platonía began to be forgotten, making room for the tradition which connected it with the Apostles.

The builders of the old basilicas on the sites where there was a Memoria of a martyr in whose honor the basilica was erected, used to orient the whole building so that the Memoria would be included within the walls and if possible in the central part, under the altar, or the so-called Confession. The Platonía had been considered to be an exception to this rule, but once its supposed connection with the Apostles was found to be mis-

taken, it became clear that traces of the old *Memoria Apostolorum* could be found only under the pavement of the central part of the basilica itself. A careful survey of several mediaeval *Itineraria*, and of the descriptions of the basilica left by Panvinio (1570) and Ugonio (1590), confirmed this conjecture; and finally the discovery by Grisar of a decree of indulgence granted by Pope Leo X in 1521, in which are given topographical indications about the altars of that church, left no doubt that in

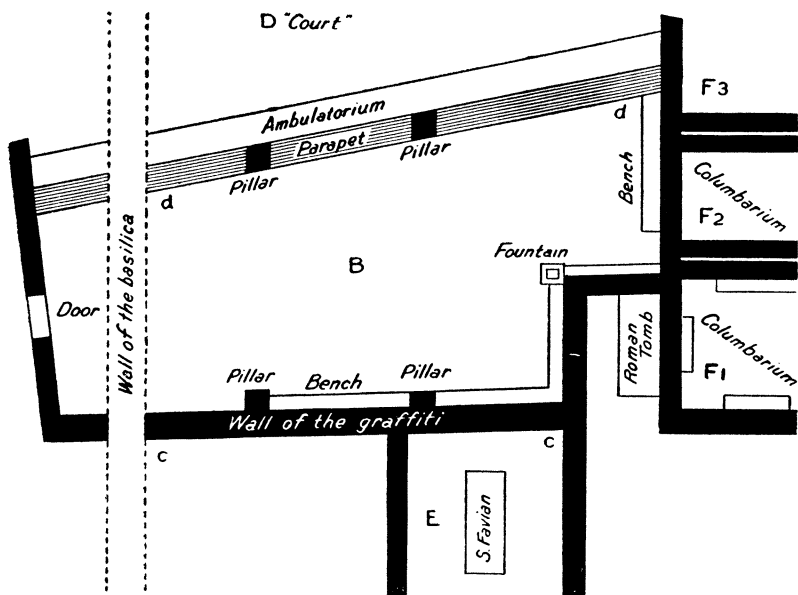


PLATE II

the central part of the nave there had been an altar called *altare reliquiarum*, having at one side the *Sepulchrum S. Petri* and on the other the *Sepulchrum S. Pauli*. That altar disappeared at the time of the unfortunate restorations of Borghese.

In March 1915 the new excavations were begun near the place where the altar of the relics probably stood (Plate I, B). From a few inches beneath the pavement to a depth of seven feet the site was found crowded with *formae*, or brick tombs, arranged in stories. Some of them had dated inscriptions, the oldest of which gives the consular date corresponding to the

year 356 or 357 A.D. If this necropolis was started after the basilica had been built, we must conclude that the basilica itself was erected about that time, that is to say under the pontificate of Liberius.⁴⁶ When the tombs had been removed, it was found that the site had been a hall of irregular shape of about 160 square feet. (See Plate II, p. 73.)

It was closed on the east side by a wall (c-c), the upper part of which was demolished to make way for the pavement of the basilica. On the lower part of this wall were traces of a bench running along its whole length. The upper part was decorated with frescoes representing climbing vines, and doves, and from the line of the bench up was covered with scrawls (*graffiti*) of various types in Latin and Greek letters. The opposite wall (d-d) was but a low parapet with two pillars to support the roof. The hall was therefore open to the southwest on an adjacent court (D). On the northern side the hall was closed by three Roman columbaria (F1, F2, F3). These columbaria were found elegantly decorated and still contained some of the *ollae*.⁴⁷ It was not difficult to identify this hall with one of the so-called *trichiae* or *pergulae* which during the fourth century could be seen commonly near Christian basilicas or cemeteries.⁴⁸ They were covered with a light roof of tiles, or even simple vines, and there the Christians gathered to celebrate funereal banquets. The bench around the walls, the little fountain in the corner (*g*), the frescoes, and the graffiti mentioning such banquets, leave no doubt that ad Catacumbas there was a *trichia* attached to the Memoria Apostolorum.⁴⁹ Behind the wall c-c, but on a higher level than the pavement of the *trichia*, there was a cella (E) in which were three sarcophagi containing mummified bodies. Within the middle sarcophagus above the head of the body, was a marble opisthographic tablet with the inscription: "*S. Favianus ic requiesit.*" The form of the letters is of a mediaeval type. Lietzmann (p. 120) thought that in this cella and in these sarcophagi the Apostles had been deposited. There is no ground for such an assumption: it is impossible to admit that the hiding place of the bodies could have been on a higher level than the *trichia*; and moreover if the sarcophagi had been those of the Apostles they would not

have been used for other bodies, nor the place crowded with other tombs.

At the same time, excavations executed under the right side of the apse brought to light imposing remains of an old Roman villa, with some halls beautifully decorated, and with a number of inscriptions and objects of classic Roman art.⁵⁰ (Plate I, W.)

At the close of this first phase of the excavation, while the discovery of the triclia had introduced new elements into the problem, yet the attempt to find traces of the Memoria Apostolorum had failed. New excavations carried on for short periods during 1916 and 1917 did not throw any further light on the subject, although three other columbaria (F4, F5, F6) added new details to what was already known about the topography and the use of the site before the erection of the basilica.^{50a}

In 1919 excavation was begun in the upper part of the court (D). When it was carried down to the tufaceous rock on which stand the foundation walls of the basilica, a large cavity (G) was found reaching the depth of about thirty feet below the level of the pavement of the basilica. Here was made the unexpected discovery of a group of three large funereal chambers irregularly disposed on a broken line (H, L, M), dug deep into the rock, with entrance doors in the area of the cavity (G). On one of those doors there is the name of M. Clodius Hermes, and paintings representing funereal banquets. Other paintings were found within the chamber, while two other chambers are adorned with stuccoes of fine workmanship. One of them was originally a columbarium adapted afterwards for interments; the other two contain *loculi*, or burial niches, similar to the Christian *cubiculi*. The chamber L seems to have belonged to a *collegium funeraticium*. There is no doubt that these sepulchres were originally built and used by pagans. The date of their construction is to be assigned to the first or second century; but there is evidence that they were in use up to the middle of the third century. On the rocky wall of the cavity (G) other tombs were dug, probably by Christians, as is inferred from an inscription.⁵¹

These discoveries proved two things: *first*, that on that site there was a necropolis of pagan origin and connected with the

buildings which we call the Roman villa; and, *second*, that Christians themselves used this necropolis before the construction of the basilica. The unusual depth of the cavity with its surrounding tombs explains why the name *ad catacumbas* was given to the place. It is well known that the name *catacumba* belonged originally to this site, and only afterwards was extended to other Christian cemeteries. De Rossi proposed the etymology of *κατά* and *accubitoria* (*cumbae*), but it seems more

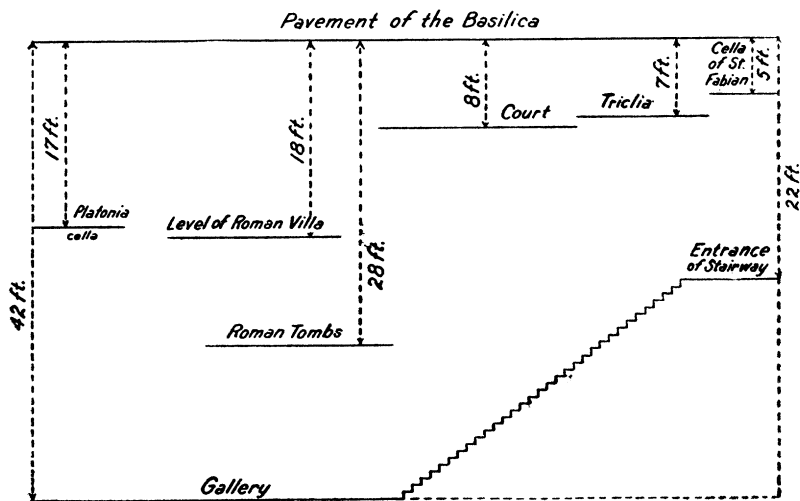


PLATE III

probable, and it is confirmed by the present discovery, that the name owes its origin to *κατά* and *κύμβος* (deep cavity with a concave bottom).

During the excavations of 1915, on the left side of the court (D), was discovered the beginning of a stairway (S) at about twenty-two feet below the pavement of the basilica. (Plate III). The entrance had been partially obstructed by the wall of the left nave, and was filled with debris. When in 1919 this debris was removed it was found that the steps ran down a depth of more than forty feet, to a gallery three feet wide and twelve feet in length, which ended in a kind of cella of irregular shape about seven feet wide. Behind this cella there was the bottom of a pit (P), whose mouth was found at the level of the old

Roman villa. The walls of the gallery show the tufa through which it is dug, with exception of a plastered strip (Plate I, Z) about three feet wide, not far from the end of the stairway on which graffiti are scrawled as on the wall of the triclia.

This last discovery was again thought to have solved the problem. According to Professor Marucchi the bodies of the Apostles were hidden in this gallery, exactly under the plastered strip. The names of Peter and Paul scrawled on the strip several times, with the usual invocation, *In mente habete*, leave no doubt that the gallery was connected with the cult of the Apostles ad Catacumbas. It seemed strange, however, that no other signs could be found in such a holy place, than a few rude and hardly decipherable charcoal scrawls — no inscriptions, no paintings, no decorations of any kind, nor any trace of a tomb or of an altar. Was this the venerated Memoria Apostolorum? This was plainly a serious difficulty for the theory. Marucchi tried to explain the enigma by supposing that originally the gallery ended at the point where there is the plastered strip, under which he supposes that the bodies of the Apostles were deposited. Being a temporary shelter, and so small that there was hardly room for anything else but the coffins, no work of ornamental character was done in it. Later, after the removal of the bodies, in order to make the place more accessible to pious visitors, the gallery was prolonged as far as the pit, and this gave origin to the mediaeval legend that the bodies of the Apostles were hidden in a pit. The mouth of the pit, which was originally at the level of the Roman villa, was raised so as to emerge near the wall of the crypt called Platonía, and within the Platonía Pope Damasus built the Memoria Apostolorum, that is, the cella under the altar where is the sarcophagus divided in two sections by a marble slab. This sarcophagus was never used; it never contained the bodies of the Apostles, but was a mere cenotaph, commemorative of the translation of the venerated relics. Later, the martyr Quirinus was deposited in the same crypt, but not in the sarcophagus, and the Platonía became at the same time a monument to Quirinus, without ceasing to be the Memoria Apostolorum. Professor Marucchi's explanation is very in-

genious, but it is too conjectural to be accepted without further evidence.^{51a}

After all the whole burden of proof is put upon the graffiti in the gallery and those of the trichia. It is to them that we must turn for conclusive evidence.

In the trichia were found 191 fragments of graffiti, some still on the wall, but mostly in the debris of the same wall scattered among the tombs, or on the floor of the trichia.⁵² Thirty-three of them are written in Greek,⁵³ the rest in Latin. They may be divided in three classes: *a.* those which give only names like Felicitas, Vitalis, Maxima, Quiracius, and even Cristus.⁵⁴ *b.* those which contain invocations to Peter and Paul. This is the largest class:

PAVLE ET PETRE PETITE PRO VICTORE
 PAULE PETRE PETITE PRO ERATE ROGATE
 PAVLE ET PETRE IN MENTE HABETE SOZOMENUM ET
 PETRUS ET PAVLVS IN MENTE HABEATIS ANTONIUS
 ΠΕΤΡΕ ΕΤ ΠΑΤΑΑΙ ΙΝ ΜΕΝΤΕ
 ΠΑΤΑΕ ΚΑΙ ΠΕΤΡΕ ΜΝΗΜΟΝΕΤΑΙ ΤΙΜΟΚΤΑΤΗΝ ΚΑΙ ΕΤΤΤΧΕΙΑΝ
 . . . Paule et PetRE A PETITE PRO NATIVV IN PERPETVVm

and many other of the same kind.

c. The third class (only eight graffiti) contain the word *refrigerium*, in a meaning which is new in Christian epigraphy.

. . . DVS IN . . . E REFRIGERAVimus
 FELICISSIMUS CVM Suis
 XIII KAL APRILES
 REFRIGERAVI
 PARTHENIVS IN DEO ET NOS IN DEO OMNES
 AT PAVLVm
 ET PETRum
 REFRIGeravi
 DALMATIVS
 BOTVM IS PROMISIT
 REFRIGERIVM
 PETRO ET PAVLO
 TOMIVS COELIVS
 REFRIGERIVM FECI

and three others, in a more fragmentary condition but in which

the word *refrigerium* is easily recognizable. The graffiti of the gallery are few and contain invocations like:

VI IDVS AVG. PRIMVM . . . PETE . . . ORATIONIBVS ET BOTIS

PETRE ET PAVLE IMMENTEM (sic) HABE

TE PRIMVM ET PRIMAM IVGALE EIVS

ET SATVRNINAM CONIVGEM . . . PRIMI

ET VICTORINVM PATREM . . . IN

SEMPER IN AETERNO . . .

PETRE ET PAVLE IN Mente habete

On the arch is one scrawl in which probably the first two syllables of the word *REFRIGerium* may be identified, and near it there is a rough sketch of a cup with handles.

The graffiti of the first and of the second class do not afford any special evidence. Styger⁵⁵ suggests that invocations of martyrs are usually found in the cemeteries and only near their tombs, and therefore invocations like *Petre et Paule in mente habete*, would not have been written on the wall of the trichia and of the gallery unless the bodies of Peter and Paul were there. *Nimis probat*. No doubt graffiti with invocations are found commonly in the cemeteries and near the tombs of the martyrs, but that the Christians in Rome could not or would not write invocations to the Apostles in a place which, although it did not contain their relics, was dedicated to them, is still to be proved.

The real importance is with the graffiti of the third class. From them it is evident, that the Christians used to gather in the trichia and to celebrate there or in the gallery the rite of *refrigerium*; but the *refrigerium* is essentially a sepulchral rite; therefore the *refrigeria* in honor of Peter and Paul celebrated in that place necessarily suppose the presence of the bodies of Peter and Paul ad Catacumbas. It seems a strong argument, but its strength is more apparent than real when it is carefully analyzed.

First of all, what is this rite of the *refrigerium* mentioned by the graffiti of the trichia? The word *refrigerium* (ἀνάψυξις) is peculiar to the Christian Latinity,⁵⁶ and is found frequently in its metaphorical meaning of eternal joy in heaven or spiritual

refreshment in general.⁵⁷ Such a use in Christian inscriptions, is not uncommon. Equally common is the use of *refrigerium* in its material meaning of food and the like.⁵⁸ Tertullian (Apol. c. 39) uses the word of the fraternal agape of the Christians: "*inopes quosque refrigerio isto iuvamus.*" The agapae, or fraternal banquets, offered to the poor members of the community, had no relation to any funereal ceremony, and were held in the usual meeting places of the Christians. Now the word *refrigerium* in the graffiti of the triclia cannot be taken in its metaphorical meaning, but only in the material meaning of a banquet. A *triclia*, or *pergula*, was usually a place where friends and relatives would gather, "*ad confrequentandam memoriam quiescentium*"⁵⁹ with a funeral repast — "*Locum aediculae cum pergula et solarium tectum junctum in quo populus collegii epuletur.*"⁶⁰ No doubt the triclia ad Catacumbas was one of these places. After the excavations of the year 1915, when it was thought that the necropolis was later in time than the basilica, the existence itself of the triclia in that place was considered as convincing evidence that it had been built near the tombs of the Apostles to celebrate their memory with fraternal banquets. The excavations of 1919 have left no doubt that a pagan cemetery and after it a Christian one occupied the site before the basilica was erected, and therefore the triclia may not have been originally dedicated to the Apostles. There is, however, no doubt that it was used at some time for banquets in honor of the Apostles. Were those banquets of a funereal character, implying that the bodies of the Apostles were ad Catacumbas when the banquets were held?

Such a question leads us to inquire about the period in which the graffiti were written. Dr. Styger remarks quite rightly that it is a rather difficult investigation. The graffiti, which usually are scrawls from the hand of common people, always present the most puzzling combinations of hand-writing. Side by side with letters of an archaic form, we find others anticipating new forms which only later acquired right of citizenship in the caligraphic tradition. The difficulty is still greater when these graffiti are found in a city like Rome, where people from all the corners of the world flocked together and would naturally use

in writing their provincial peculiarities and traditions. In general, so far as palaeography can judge, the graffiti of the trichlia may belong to the third as well as to the fourth century. But fortunately in the present case there are other elements than palaeographic guesses from which a more definite conclusion may be arrived at. As for the *terminus ad quem*, it is fixed by the erection of the basilica, at which time the upper walls of the trichlia were demolished, open access to the place was cut off, and it was converted into a burial vault. As we said above, the basilica was built in the pontificate of Liberius or of Damasus, that is to say between 356 and 384. As for the *terminus a quo*, the rite of the *refrigerium* itself may throw some light on the date of the graffiti.

If the refrigeria to which the graffiti in the trichlia bear witness were banquets in honor of the Apostles and near their tombs, they cannot have taken place before the second decade of the fourth century. It was only after the peace of the Church that such banquets in honor of the martyrs began to be celebrated. On this point we have the explicit and unimpeachable testimony of Augustine, who says:

. . . Post persecutiones tam multas, tamque vehementes, cum facta pace, turbae gentilium in Christianum nomen venire cupientes hoc impedirentur, quod dies festos cum idolis suis solerent in abundantia epularum et ebrietate consumere, nec facile ab his . . . voluptatibus se possent abstinere, visum fuisse maioribus nostris ut huic infirmitatis parti interim parceretur, diesque festos, post eos quos relinquebant, alios in honore sanctorum martyrum vel non simili sacrilegio, quamvis simili luxu celebrarentur.⁶¹

The graffiti of the trichlia were therefore written between 320 and 356 or 380.

It is suggested also that the *refrigerium* included, besides the banquet, the rite of pouring a libation on the tomb of the martyrs, and that the pious visitors ad Catacumbas, after the banquet in the trichlia, would go down to the gallery, stop under the plastered strip, and complete their ceremony by pouring the content of their cup into a little hole of which traces were found in the floor.⁶²

But against all these assumptions there are serious objections. First of all, if *refrigerium* must be interpreted as a banquet at the tomb of a martyr, would it be a necessary in-

ference that between 320 and 380 the bodies of Peter and Paul were still ad Catacumbas? We have already remarked that if the translation of the bodies to their original resting places had taken place after Constantine, such a great event would certainly have left some trace in the records of the time. As a matter of fact, the archaeologists themselves who hold fast to the tradition that the remains of Peter and Paul found a shelter ad Catacumbas assign this event either to a very early period, shortly after the death of the apostles,⁶³ or to the year 258; but all of them agree that the bodies remained ad Catacumbas for a very brief time — one or two years.^{63a} It has to be admitted, therefore, that the *refrigeria* were held ad Catacumbas *absente cadavere*, and only because the place had once been sanctified by the presence of the bodies of the Apostles. This would be possible, so far as the banquet is concerned, but it is difficult to account in the same way for the pouring of libations. We have evidence that perfumes were poured on the real tombs of the martyrs in the fourth century, and we read in Prudentius,

Nos tecta fovebimus ossa
violis et fronde frequenti
titulumque et frigida saxa
liquido spargemus odore.

and in the poem to St. Hippolytus,

Oscula perspicuo figunt impressa metallo
balsama defundunt, fletibus ora rigant.⁶⁴

We have evidence also that libations of wine were made by the Christians *super tumulos defunctorum*” (Augustine, Sermo 190), and also on the tombs of the martyrs, in the belief that they would enjoy the refreshment. Paulinus of Nola looked with indulgent eyes upon this kind of superstition:

. . . quia mentibus error
Inrepat rudibus; nec tantae conscia culpa
Simplicitas pietate cadit, male credula sanctos
Perfusus, halante mero, gaudere sepulchris.

Poema xxvii. Natale de S. Felice, 564–567.

But we have no proof that this performance was called *refrigerium*, and no evidence whatever that it was done anywhere but at the actual tombs of the martyrs. Moreover, if the *re-*

frigerium was a banquet to be held at the tomb of a martyr, would it not be strange that the Roman Christians, or visitors from the provinces, should hold their banquets in honor of Peter and Paul ad Catacumbas, in the place where the bodies of the Apostles were not, when they could have gone to the real tombs, which were not only equally accessible but even more easily reached than the site three miles out on the Appian Way? ^{64a}

In the last analysis the whole question hinges on the meaning to be assigned to the word *refrigerium* in the graffiti of the trichia. The Roman archaeologists agree that it is used in a way which has no example in Christian epigraphy. When we read *Petro et Paulo Tomius Coelius refrigeravi*," we cannot interpret the words of an offering for the eternal rest of Peter and Paul, as they would first suggest. In the fourth century the cult of the martyrs was already well developed, and although among simple-minded Christians there might be room for misunderstanding, ⁶⁵ yet it is not probable that in Rome the custom of offering prayers and oblations *for* the Apostles could have been so long tolerated in one of the places sacred to their memory. The meaning of the phrase is, "Tomius Coelius celebrated a *refrigerium* in honor of Peter and Paul." But then is it not evident that the word *refrigerium* has lost its original meaning and its connection with a funereal rite which was the essential part of that meaning? The fact, also, that these graffiti ad Catacumbas present the only instances of the use of *refrigerium* in the sense of a banquet, not *for*, but *in honor of*, somebody, joined with the fact that such a use is not found in regular inscriptions which would give it a kind of official sanction, but in scribbles traced on walls by common people — is not this a strong indication that the word *refrigerium* had come in the popular use to signify merely a banquet, having a loose religious connection and celebrated in a place dedicated to the memory of a martyr?

In other words, I do not see why, when it is admitted that the *refrigeria* celebrated ad Catacumbas are not the usual *refrigeria* known to us from other sources, but a peculiar celebration which here for the first time we find called *refrigerium*,

it must be taken as self-evident that such a celebration, improperly called *refrigerium*, retained the original sepulchral character of the true *refrigerium*. We are entitled at least to the benefit of the doubt. The argument would be cogent only in case we were prepared to interpret the graffito as meaning that Tomius Coelius, in his pious ignorance, offered a *refrigerium* for the eternal rest of Peter and Paul. In that case the funereal character of the ceremony could not be denied, and the graffiti would supply the evidence that the bodies of Peter and Paul were — or once had been — there. But as yet no one is ready to accept such an interpretation.

There is a passage in one of Augustine's Epistles which may, it seems to me, suggest a plausible explanation for the *refrigeria* ad Catacumbas. It is well known that the custom of holding banquets at the tombs of the martyrs rapidly degenerated, and like the pagan celebrations of which they were a thinly disguised survival, became veritable orgies. Early in the second half of the fourth century the Church started a campaign for their abolition. In the already quoted epistle to Aurelius, bishop of Tagaste, Augustine, then only a presbyter, tells how he had tried to persuade the people of Hippo to follow the example of those churches beyond the sea which had never indulged in such banquets or had already abolished them. It seems that somebody in his audience remarked that in Rome, even in the Vatican Basilica, people held banquets and got drunk every day:

Et quoniam de basilica beati apostoli Petri, quotidianus vinolentiae proferebantur exempla, dixi primo audisse nos saepe esse prohibitum, sed quod remotus sit locus ab episcopi conversatione et in tanta civitate magna sit carnalium multitudo, peregrinis praesertim, qui novi subinde venirent, tanto violentius quanto inscitius illam consuetudinem retinentibus, tam immanem pestem nondum compesci sedarique potuisse.

This custom has been forbidden again and again, says Augustine, but it has been impossible to stop it, because those banquets are celebrated in places far from the surveillance of the bishop, and because Rome is such a large city and there are always so many pilgrims both ignorant and drunkards.

No doubt in Rome, and especially at the tombs of the Apostles, many restrictions must have been imposed to check

the abuses of these banquets. Such restrictions, as always happens, hit first the poor folk, while they were not enforced against wealthy and influential people like Pammachius, who in 397 gave a great banquet at the Vatican, as a *refrigerium* for the soul of his deceased wife, Paulina.⁶⁶ The poor people, and those who wanted more freedom, had to search for a more available place than the gorgeous basilicas of the Vatican or the Ostian Way. For this the site ad Catacumbas was well adapted; it was a *locus remotus ab episcopi conversatione*, and was connected by an old tradition either with both the Apostles, or at least with Peter; and there those who were not allowed to do so at the Vatican held their religious banquets to which they gave the name *refrigeria*, perhaps like those celebrated at the tombs of the Apostles. And thus these banquets, assuming the name of *refrigeria* by analogy, may well have been one of the things which contributed to create the legend of the translation of the bodies of the Apostles ad Catacumbas.

Augustine's epistle is dated in the year 392, but he says that prohibitions against the banquets had been issued again and again, and we may safely assume that in Rome the reaction against these abuses must have been felt strongly at least from the middle of the century. Now, according to Dr. Styger, explorer of the trichia, the graffiti might have been written during the second half of the century, and not very long before the destruction of the trichia. As for the trichia itself, it is probable that in that place there was from much earlier times a trichia connected with the *collegia funeraticia* which owned their tombs there, and that it was either rebuilt or adapted by the Christians for their *refrigeria*.⁶⁷ It seems, however, that it was not in use by them for any very long time, because the graffiti are not very numerous, and may all have been written within a few years. And, finally, the motive for the construction of the basilica itself may have been not only a desire to honor the Apostles, but also to do away with the trichia and with it the abuses of the banquets. If the basilica was erected under Damasus, as many archaeologists think more probable, we should have a correspondence of dates which makes my suggestion plausible.

The final result is that up to the present the archaeological evidence is not sufficient to validate the tradition that the bodies of the Apostles were at some time or other removed ad Catacumbas and temporarily deposited there. But let us remark by the way of conclusion, that even, *dato et non concesso*, that the *refrigeria* mentioned in the triclia were ceremonies of a sepulchral character, and that the *hic abitasse* of Damasus meant "here were buried Peter and Paul," we should still be far from having the positive proof of the assumed translation. All that could be legitimately deduced from such evidence is that the tradition which appears in literary sources only in the fifth century already existed in the latter part of the fourth century. But could we say that we had thus found for it a sound historical basis? In making the tradition one century older we should not have disposed of the difficulties which stand in the way of supposing that the bodies of Peter and Paul were at any time removed from their tombs. The burden of proof would still be on the archaeologists.

NOTES

1. The articles and publications of which extensive use has been made in writing this article are the following:

Dr. Paolo Styger, Scavi a S. Sebastiano. Scoperta di una memoria degli Apostoli Pietro e Paolo e del corpo di S. Fabiano Martire. — *Römische Quartalschrift*, 1915, pp. 73-110.

Gli Apostoli Pietro e Paolo ad Catacumbas. *Ibid.* 1915, pp. 149-205.

A. De Waal, Die Apostelgruft ad Catacumbas an der Via Appia. — *Supplementheft d. Römische Quartalschrift*. 1894.

Zu Wilpert's Domus Petri. — *Römische Quartalschrift*, 1912, pp. 123-132.

Gli Scavi nel pavimento della Basilica di S. Sebastiano sulla Via Appia. — *Ibid.* 1915, pp. 145-148.

O. Fasiolo, La Pianta di S. Sebastiano. — *Römische Quartalschrift*, 1915, pp. 206-220.

F. Grossi-Gondi, S. J., Il Refrigerium celebrato in onore dei SS. Apostoli Pietro e Paolo nel sec. IV ad Catacumbas. — *Römische Quartalschrift*, 1915, pp. 221-249.

La Basilica di S. Sebastiano sull'Appia dopo le insigni scoperte degli anni 1915-16. — *Civiltà Cattolica*, 1917, vol. 2, pp. 588-598: 3, pp. 519-534.

La Data della costruzione della Basilica Apostolorum sull'Appia. — *Ibid.* 1918, 3, pp. 230-242.

Orazio Marucchi, Le recenti scoperte presso la Basilica di S. Sebastiano. — *Nuovo Bullettino di Archeologia Cristiana*. Roma. 1916, pp. 5-61.

Ulteriore studio storico e monumentale sulla Memoria Apostolica presso le Catacombe della Via Appia. *Ibid.* 1917, pp. 47-87.

La Memoria sepolcrale degli Apostoli sulla Via Appia secondo il risultato delle ultime ricerche. *Ibid.* 1920, p. 531.

Conferenze di Archeologia Cristiana. In all the issues of the *Bullettino* quoted above.

H. Grisar, S. J., Die Römische Sebastianuskirche und ihre Apostelgruft im Mittelalter. — *Römische Quartalschrift*. 1895.

E. Buonaiuti, Gli Scavi recentissimi a S. Sebastiano. — *Bollettino di Letteratura Critico-religiosa*. 1915, pp. 375-381.

G. B. Lugari, I varii seppellimenti degli Apostoli Pietro e Paolo sull'Appia. — *Bessarione*. 1898.

T. Wilpert, Domus Petri. — *Römische Quartalschrift*, 1912, pp. 117-122.

2. Lietzmann, p. 177. W. W. Rockwell, The Latest Discussion on Peter and Paul in Rome, *American Journal of Theology*, 1918, p. 121.

3. Furius Dionysius Philocalus was either the compiler or simply the copyist of a *Chronography*, which is but a collection of various Roman chronographic lists. Two of them are those related to the Roman Church which are called the *Depositio Episcoporum*, containing the obituary of the Roman bishops from 255 to 352; and the *Depositio Martyrum*, or list of the commemorations of the martyrs celebrated by the Roman Church, which is supposed to reproduce the oldest *Feriale* of that Church that we possess. Philocalus com-

piled his Chronography first in 336, but later revised it and carried the lists down to the year 354. The text of the Chronography in Monum. Germ. Hist., Chronica Minora I. See Mommsen, Ueber den Chronographen vom Jahre 354. Leipzig, 1850, and L. Duchesne, Liber Pontificalis, I, p. vi.

4. L. Duchesne, Christian Worship (English translation) 5th ed., p. 278.

5. The festival of February 22 often occurred in Lent. In countries observing the Gallican rite, where Lenten observance was considered incompatible with the honouring of saints, the difficulty was avoided by holding the festival on the 18th of January. When about the end of the sixth century the bishop of Auxerre, Annarius, compiled the so-called Martyrologium Hieronymianum, he thought it advisable to keep both dates, that of the Roman Calendar (attributing it to Antioch, a see which was believed to have been also occupied by Peter) and that of the Gallican Calendar, attributing it to Rome. But it was only in the sixteenth century that such an arrangement was adopted by the Roman Church. The assumption that the festival of February 22 might have been originally connected with the veneration of the relic known in Rome as the Chair of St. Peter (De Rossi, Bull. Arch. Christ., 1867, p. 38, and Lietzmann, p. 73) is untenable. No trustworthy mention of such a relic is found earlier than 1217. Cf. Duchesne, Christian Worship, p. 280.

6. Duchesne, *ibid.*, p. 277.

7. O. Marucchi, A. De Waal, F. Grossi-Gondi, P. Styger, and others.

8. According to tradition Paul was executed *ad Aquas Salvias*, which is not exactly *iuxta* the present basilica.

9. Acta Apostolorum Apocrypha, ed. Lipsius, I, 175. Cf. P. Styger, Gli Apostoli Pietro e Paolo ad Catacumbas, pp. 182-188. Cf. also Lipsius, Die Apocryphen Apostelgeschichten und Apostellegenden, II, 391-404.

10. Lipsius, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 220 f.

11. Cureton, Ancient Syriac Documents, pp. 61 f.

12. Epist. iv, 30, Ewald-Hartmann I, 264 f.

13. Notitia portarum, compiled about the middle of the seventh century. Cf. Styger, *l. c.* pp. 194-196.

13a. Itinerarium Salisburgense. Cf. De Rossi, Roma sotterranea, I, 180.

13b. Decree of Indulgence of Leo X. Cf. Grisar, *op. cit.* Römische Quartalschrift, 1895, p. 452.

14. Duchesne, Liber Pontificalis, p. civ.

15. *Ibid.*, p. xlvi. Duchesne suggests the possibility that the text as it is given in the Hieronymianum is older than the Philocalian.

16. The Hieronymianum (recension of Auxerre) contains a separate commemoration under January 25 of a *Translatio S. Pauli Apostoli*, without any indication as to where this translation had taken place. But we are now too well acquainted with the method used by the compilers of martyrologies in filling the days which had no commemoration to give any importance to this *Translatio*.

17. Ambrosius, Hymn. x.

17a. Lipsius, *op. cit.*, p. 173. The same motive is repeated in the Greek Πράξεις: Χαίρετε καὶ ἀγαλλιᾶσθε, ὅτι μεγάλους προστάτας ἡξιώθητε ἔχειν. *Ibid.*, p. 219.

18. Basil of Caesarea wrote again and again to Damasus and to the western episcopacy, but his advances were coldly rejected. Some of his letters did not even get a reply; to another the only answer of Rome was to send Basil a declaration of faith to subscribe. "When one is haughty," wrote Basil to a friend, alluding to the pope, "when from the height of his throne he refuses to listen to those who from a humble place tell him the truth, it is impossible to deal with him about matters of general interest" (Ep. 215). In another letter he says: "Those western people do not know the truth and they do not want to know it; they are seduced by their false prepossessions and dislike those who tell them the truth. I should like to write to their coryphaeus (the pope); I would tell him nothing about ecclesiastical matters, because he has no idea of our true situation and does not care to know what it is, but I would make him understand that one cannot mistake arrogance for dignity, without committing a sin sufficient to provoke the wrath of God." (Ep. 239.)

19. Basil was already dead, but, as Duchesne says, his spirit was present and triumphed in the dogmatic work of the Council.

20. Καὶ τὸν λογισμὸν, ὡς ἐπαινετός, σκόπει.
 Δεῖν γὰρ συνάλλεσθ' ἡλίω τὰ πράγματα
 Ἐντεῦθεν ἀρχὴν λαμβάνονθ' ὅθεν θεὸς
 Ἐλαμψεν ἡμῖν σαρκικῶ προβλήματι.
 Τί γοῦν; Μάθωμεν μὴ σέβειν περιτροπὰς
 Χριστοῦ δὲ σάρκα παντὸς ἡμῶν τοῦ γένους
 Οἶεσθ' ἀπαρχήν. Εἰ δ' ἐντεῦθεν ἥρξατο,
 Εἴποι τάχ' ἂν τις, ἔνθα πλεῖον τὸ θράσος
 Ὡς ῥαδίως ἐνταῦθα καὶ θανούμενος
 Ἐκ τοῦδ' ἔγερσις, ἐκ δὲ τοῦ σωτηρία.

Carmen de Vita Sua. 1690-96.

21. The epigram for the Martyr Gorgonius:

Hic quicumque venit, sanctorum limina querat
 inveniet vicina in sede habitare beatos.

22. Marucchi, *La Memoria Apostolorum*, in *Bullettino di Archeologia Cristiana*, 1917, pp. 51-53.

22a. An argument in favor of this assumption is afforded by the graffito *DOMVS PETRI* which was found on the wall of a chamber under a little chapel near the Platonia, now itself called *Domus Petri* (Plate I). This chamber seems to have been in existence earlier than the basilica. The graffito, however, seems to have been written not earlier than the fifth century, and therefore cannot be considered as reliable testimony to the tradition connecting Peter with the old Roman villa. See Wilpert and De Waal on the *Domus Petri* in *Römische Quartalschrift*, 1912.

23. The remark was made by the architect Gamurrini of Rome in a lecture given at the Arcadia, July 1, 1917. Gamurrini, who is an authority in archaeology, rejects the tradition that the Apostles were removed ad Catacumbas.

24. Vers la fin du iv^e siècle, on voit surgir sur certains points de la chrétienté, des cultes à qui semble manquer essentiellement la consécration de la tradition vivante. On découvre des martyrs inconnus jusque-là, et on se hâte de leur rendre les honneurs dont les autres martyrs étaient en possession

de date immémoriale. Delehaye, *Les origines du culte des Martyrs*, 1912, p. 85.

25. *Hic multa corpora sanctorum requisivit et invenit. Liber Pontificalis*, ed. Duchesne, I, 212.

26. Ihm, *Damasi Epigrammata*, 27.

27. Mansi III, 968, Hefele-Leclercq, *Histoire des Conciles*, II. 2, p. 129.

28. Delehaye remarks: "L'on reconnaîtra aussi que, s'il (Damasus) avait voulu rappeler le séjour de leurs reliques, la tyrannie du mètre ne l'en aurait pas empêché, puisqu'il suffisait, au lieu d'écrire *nomina*, de dire: *corpora quisque Petri pariter Paulique requirit*." *Ibid.*, p. 308.

29. The utterances of the Orientals about the nationality of the Apostles, mentioned above, may have contributed to the origin of the legend. It is known how the imagination of the people gives a concrete form to ideas and traditions. It is possible, however, that the legend had an historical foundation in some event which must have occurred in Rome during the first half of the third century. I propose to deal with this point in a work on the Church of Rome at the beginning of the third century, which will appear soon.

30. Delehaye, *l. c.*, pp. 302-308.

31. *Ibid.*, pp. 35 and 61. Cf. also, Ferrini, *De iure sepulchrorum apud Romanos* (Archivio Giuridico, Pisa, 1883), and Wamser, *De iure sepulchrali Romanorum*. Darmstadt, 1887.

32. In Rome the cult of the martyrs was started much later than in the East and in the Church of Africa. There are no traces of such a cult in Rome before the third or fourth decade of the third century. That explains the fact that when the Church of Rome thought of commemorating its martyrs of the first two centuries it had to fix arbitrarily their *dies natalis*, because nobody knew the exact dates. It is not improbable that the commemoration of the 29th of June in honor of the Apostles was the first to be regularly instituted, and that the date of the institution was recorded (258). I would suggest, also, that such an institution might have been made not only in imitation of what was done in other churches, and especially in the Church of Africa, which was in close relation with the Roman Christian community, but also in consequence of the fact that the Christians were at that time unable to visit the tombs of the Apostles. The commemoration ad Catacumbas was a kind of a substitute for the acts of piety that Christians had been accustomed to perform formerly on the apostolic tombs and which now the persecution prevented them from accomplishing.

33. Pio Franchi dei Cavalieri, *Studi e Testi Vaticani*, 27, fasc. 5, pp. 23 ff.

34. "La translation du pape Zephyrinus n'est point attesté par les documents. C'est un postulat de quelques archéologues et nullement nécessaire pour expliquer des faits établis. Delehaye, *l. c.* p. 77.

35. Of Silanus, the Philocalian says: "*Hunc martyrem Novati furati sunt*. That the Novatians, who posed as the guardians of a rigid morality and of the old traditions, should be guilty of the violation of a tomb, seems impossible. On the other hand, it is quite natural that their enemies might put in circulation slanderous accusations against them. It cannot, however, be considered as an evident fact, especially since as Delehaye remarks: "La mention de l'équipée dans un document qui n'est qu'une aride nomenclature, prouve qu'elle était de fraîche date." *L. c.*, p. 78.

36. The question about the remains of Pope Fabianus is more complex. The supposed translation of them to the Church of Santa Prassede, and later to that of St. Martin, has been proved to be unhistorical (Silvagni, *La Basilica di S. Martino ai Monti*, etc. Rome, 1912); and in any case would fall in a much later period (ninth century). The *Liber Pontificalis* says that he was buried in the cemetery of Callistus, and in fact De Rossi found there the epitaph of Fabianus. The first mention of the removal of the body of Fabianus ad Catacumbas is to be found in the martyrology called *Romanum Parvum*: "*Romae Fabiani papae et martyris ad vestigia Apostolorum sepulti.*" Now the *Romanum Parvum* is a forgery due to Adon, bishop of Vienne, about the middle of the ninth century, as was clearly demonstrated by Dom Quentin, *Les Martyrologues historiques du Moyen Age*, Paris, 1908, pp. 408-464. The discovery of a body near the trichia ad Catacumbas in 1915, with the inscription *S. Fabianus Martyr ic requiesit*, was taken by Styger (*Römische Quartalschrift*, 1915, pp. 100 ff.) and by Grossi-Gondi (*Civiltà Cattolica*) as evidence that the body of Pope Fabianus was really translated ad Catacumbas. But as Professor Buonaiuti (*Bollettino di Letteratura Critico-religiosa*, 1915, p. 380) remarks, the inscription found on the body does not say that it was Fabianus the bishop, while such a qualification is always found in the epigraphs of the popes. Moreover, we find in various documents mention of a Fabianus Martyr different from the bishop of the same name. And after all, even granted that the body discovered ad Catacumbas is that of the pope, its translation would have happened in the ninth century.

37. On the legend of the Quatuor Coronati an exhaustive study was published by Pio Franchi dei Cavalieri, *Note agiografiche*, Fasc. 24, Roma, 1912, iii, "I Santi Quattro," pp. 57-66, giving evidence that this assumed translation of the four Pannonian martyrs never took place, and that during the sixth century the relics of four unknown martyrs in Rome were identified with the Quatuor Coronati.

38. The *Consuetudo Romana* is attested by various documents to have been in full vigor in the fourth century. When the Basilica of St. Pancratius was built on the Via Aureliana, on account of topographic difficulties it was impossible to orient the church in such a way that the body of the martyr would be in longitudinal position in relation with the axis of the building. It would have been necessary to turn the tomb, and yet it was preferred to sacrifice the architectural harmony and the tradition rather than touch the tomb. The body *ex obliquo aulae jacebat*, up to the time of Honorius (625-638), when the *consuetudo Romana* had already vanished, and the position of the tomb was changed.

39. In the beginning of the sixth century the emperor Justinian requested Pope Hormisdas (519-524) for relics of St. Laurentius, but the legates of the pope informed him of the *consuetudo Romana*, which was to send the so-called *sanctuarium* or *brandea*, that is to say pieces of linen which had been deposited for a while on the tomb of the martyrs, and to which were attributed the same miraculous powers as to the real relics. On this custom, see Grisar, *Analecta Romana*, pp. 712 ff. in reference to the tombs of the Apostles in Rome.

40. The so-called Cononian abridgment of the part of the *Liber Pontificalis* which contains the life of Damasus mentions only the Platonica as a work

erected under Damasus ad Catacumbas; but a later redaction (Neapolitan mss.) attributes to Damasus the erection of the basilica. This question gave rise to long debates among archaeologists, and it cannot be considered as settled. But there is no doubt that the basilica belongs to the second half of the fourth century.

41. The peribolos was later called *matroneum*, or place reserved to the women.

42. *Platonía*, *platoma*, or *platuma* is a low Latin word, the derived like *platea*, from the concept of space (*πλατύς*), and means a slab, or rather a space covered with marble slabs. De Rossi, *Roma Sotterranea*, I, 241. It was rather recently that this name was given to the crypt, when it was thought to be the *Platomum* of Damasus.

43. Originally they were twelve, but one was destroyed in opening the new entrance, and the two on the left side were added by closing a door on the wall.

44. De Waal, *Die Apostelgruft ad Catacumbas*, 1894, and *Römische Quartalschrift*, 1915, p. 146.

45. O. Fasiolo, *La pianta di S. Sebastiano*, *Römische Quartalschrift*, 1915, pp. 213-214.

46. Grossi-Gondi, in *Civiltà Cattolica*, 1918, 3, pp. 588 ff. Such a theory, which is untenable after the excavations of 1919, was even from the beginning contested. See the letter of Professor Giovenale in *Bullettino della Commissione archeologica comunale di Roma*, 1917, pp. 148 ff.

47. The first of these columbaria seems to have been the property of a *collegium funeraticium*, of the first or second century, but later had been used for inhumations. O. Fasiolo, *l. c.*, p. 218.

48. The *trichiae*, or *alogiae*, or *pergulae*, were frequent in the precincts of the Roman tombs. See a series of texts in Styger, *l. c.*, pp. 156-158. In Africa they were of a rather simpler type and were called *mensae*. It seems, however, that there also the *trichiae* were common near Christian cemeteries and basilicas. Augustine mentions a *Basilica trichiarum* (*Enarratio in Ps. xxxii. Sermo ii, 29*). Cf. Grossi-Gondi, *Civiltà Cattolica*, 1917, 3, p. 521.

49. This trichlia ad Catacumbas is the first to be discovered in condition good enough to give us an idea of the plan and the arrangement of such places.

50. The excavations and discoveries relating to classic art and non-Christian archaeology are carried on by the Italian R. Commission of Archaeology, and are illustrated in the *Notizie degli Scavi* and the *Monumenti* of the Lincei.

50a. In one of these columbaria an inscription was found with the name of one "Callistus Imperatoris Caesaris Vespasiani Servus." It was surmised that probably the villa and the fields surrounding it were property of the Christian branch of the Flavii, since the cemetery of Domitilla began not very far from there. (Marucchi, *Bull. Archeol. Crist.*, 1917, p. 56). Others, on the contrary, thought of the family of the Uranii, because among the ruins of an old mausoleum close to the northern walls of the basilica, an architrave was found in which were engraved in large letters the name, VRANIORUM. To his family belonged Ambrose of Milan and his brother Uranius Satyrus. Grossi-Gondi, *Civiltà Cattolica*, 1917, 2, p. 598).

51. O. Marucchi, *Bullettino di Archeologia Christiana*, 1919, pp. 7-9.

51a. One of Marucchi's capital arguments is his interpretation of the paintings in the vault of the *bisomus*, or double sarcophagus, which he identifies with the Platomum built by Damasus as a cenotaph to commemorate the Apostles' temporary burial ad Catacumbas. The paintings have almost completely disappeared, but in the traces still apparent Marucchi recognizes the figures of Christ and the twelve Apostles. De Waal, on the contrary, sees in them the figures of Christ, of the Martyr Quirinus, and other unknown personages. Probably there will be no way of settling this question. Cenotaphs in honor of the Apostles were built by Constantine in his Basilica of the Apostles in Constantinople, following the ancient custom which dedicated cenotaphs to heroes buried in far away places; but a cenotaph of Peter and Paul in Rome, a few miles from their real tombs, does not seem to be in harmony with the prevalent ideas of the times. Moreover, it seems quite certain, from the description in the mediaeval documents which have preserved its text, that Damasus' inscription was not in the Platonium. To imagine that it had been already removed from its original place, is only an arbitrary assumption.

52. List and facsimiles of them in Styger, *l. c.*, pp. 81-94.

53. Some of them contain Latin words in Greek letters.

54. Classification of the graffiti in Grossi-Gondi, *Civiltà Cattolica*, 1917, 3, p. 521.

55. *Ibid.*, p. 167.

56. The verb *refrigero* is used by classic writers and is found also in pagan inscriptions.

57. In the translations of the Bible, like, "Justus si morte preoccupatus fuerit, in refrigerio erit," Ps. 65, 11. In Christian Latin literature: "Meliores fieri coguntur qui eis credunt, metu aeterni supplicii et spe aeterni refrigerii," Tert. Apol. 39. In Christian Inscriptions, De Rossi, *passim*. Cf. Grossi-Gondi, *Il Refrigerium in onore dei SS. Apostoli*, *Römische Quartalschrift*, 1915, pp. 222-225.

58. *Passio SS. Perpetuae et Felicitatis*: Quid utique non permittis nobis refrigerare, etc.

59. Inscription in Pompei. *Giornale degli Scavi*, 1869, i, p. 242.

60. Orelli, *Inscr. Lat. Coll. n. 2417*. Styger, *l. c.*

61. *Epist.* xxix, 11.

62. Marucchi, *Bullettino di Arch. Crist.* 1916, p. 13, and 1920, p. 20.

63. Grossi-Gondi, *Römische Quartalschrift*, 1915, p. 242.

63a. According to Marucchi (*Bullettino di Archeologia Cristiana*, 1917, p. 57) the bodies of the Apostles were removed from the place ad Catacumbas to their old tombs during the pontificate of Dionysius, when the cemeteries were given back to the Church (260 A.D.). De Rossi (*Inscr. Christ. II*, p. 231-232) had already come to the conclusion on archaeological evidence that the tomb of Peter at the Vatican was not disturbed when the basilica was built on that site by Constantine. Its supposed removal from the place ad Catacumbas must have happened before the peace of the Church.

64. *Peristephanon* x, 169-172 and xi, 193-194. Dressel, pp. 65 and 450.

64a. Professor Buonaiuti (*Bollettino di Letteratura Critico-religiosa*, 1915, p. 378), called the attention to the fact that the *refrigerium* or *agape*, though an adaptation of the pagan *parentalia*, yet was not absolutely con-

nected with the tomb, but only with the memory of the martyrs, and could be celebrated outside the sepulchral precinct. Such was the case with the commemorations of the martyrs mentioned by Cyprian, as to be celebrated by himself while far from Carthage and from their tombs (Ep. 12, ed. Hartel): "celebrentur a nobis oblationes et sacrificia." Buonaiuti thinks that *oblationes* here means *agape*, as in Tertullian's passage: "Oblationes pro defunctis, pro nataliciis annua die facimus" (De Corona, 3). Moreover, it seems from St. Augustine's sermons (13, 305, 310) that agapes in honor of Cyprian were celebrated in three different places, and not only at his tomb in Carthage. To these arguments Grossi-Gondi replied at a great length (Römische Quartalschrift, 1915, pp. 231 ff.) insisting on the strictly sepulchral character of the agape-refrigerium. This reply, however, still leaves room for doubt, and the impossibility of agapes in honor of the martyrs celebrated outside their sepulchral precincts is far from demonstrated.

65. From what we know about the abuses which are so energetically deplored by Augustine in his famous letter to Aurelius of Tagaste, by the unknown author of the *De Duplici Martyrio*, and by the passage quoted above from Paulinus of Nola, such misunderstandings were far from uncommon, but can hardly be imagined to have inspired all the visitors of the trichia.

66. A description of this banquet in Paulinus of Nola, Epist. xiii.

67. The paintings found in the tombs around the deep cavity represent funereal banquets.